

NAME: Ichiuji, Katsu DATE OF BIRTH: 1896 PLACE OF BIRTH: Shimane
Age: 79 Sex: F Marital Status: _____ Education: Grammar School

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1916 Age: 20 M.S.P.B. Port of entry: Seattle
Occupation/s: 1. Nursery Business 2. Cannery Worker 3. Shoe Repair Shop owner
Place of residence: 1. San Leandro, Ca. 2. Monterey, Ca. 3. Salinas, Ca.
Religious affiliation: Buddhist Church, later Christian Church 4. Monterey, Ca.
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Hanford, California
Name of relocation center: Poston WRC, Arizona
Dispensation of property: Own home Names of bank/s: _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. Make flowers for funeral uses, etc.
Jobs held outside of camp: _____
Left camp to go to: Monterey, Ca.

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: July 3, 1945
Address/es: 1. Monterey, California 2. _____
3. _____
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: TOSH Kusunoki Date: 2/9/1975 Place: Monterey, Ca.

Translator: Yasuko Akamatsu

NAME: KATSU ICHIUJI

AGE: 79

DATE OF BIRTH: 1896

PLACE OF BIRTH: Shimane Ken

YEAR OF ENTRY INTO THE USA: 1919, 29 years old

MAJOR OCCUPATION: house wife

CAMP: Poston, Arizona

DATE OF INTERVIEW: Feb. 9, 1975

PLACE OF INTERVIEW: Monterey, California

INTERVIEWER: Tosh Kusunoki

TRANSLATOR: Yasuka Akamatsu

Mrs. Katsu Ichiuji, Pacific Grove, Calif.

Interviewed on Feb. 9, 1975

Q: Please tell me your name.

A: My name is Katsu Ichiuji.

Q: When were you born?

A: I was born in Izumo, Shimane Prefecture, Japan.

Q: Do you remember something of your childhood days?

A: I had two elder sisters and I was the youngest of the family.

Q: How many years of schooling did you have?

A: I lived in a small village. We just had a grammar school and an extension class. I didn't receive much education.

Q: Do you have any memory of your school days?

A: It's over 60 years ago and I don't remember.

Q: How about your parents?

A: My father suffered a stroke when I was 10 years old. His age was 46. When he was young, there were no schools so he attended a private class at the Buddhist Temple (called Tera-Koya) taught by the priest. At that time, there were only three persons who received such education in my village. My father was very studious and wanted to become a doctor but when his older brother died, he had to take over the responsibilities of his home and farm.

Q: Please tell me about your mother.

A: She took care of my father.

Q: What was the religion of your family?

A: We were Zenshu Buddhists.

Q: When did you come to America?

A: In 1916. I was 20 years old and I came as a "picture bride."

Q: Please tell me more about "picture brides."

A: The men were already here in America. Instead of returning to Japan to find their wife, they sent their picture back home to relatives. The relatives picked the prospective bride and showed the picture of the man. If she is agreeable, then her picture was sent to the man in America for his approval. The marriages were arranged in this manner.

Q: Did your husband send his picture to you?

A: He sent it to his brother's place.

Q: Was he from the same village?

A: No.

Q: When you came as a bride, what was the name of the ship you came on?

A: It was Yokohama-Maru. There were so many that wanted to come at that time, we had to draw for a space on the ship. I couldn't

get on "Shunyo-Maru" that came directly to San Francisco. I had to take "Yokohama-Maru" which arrived in Seattle.

Q: What type of people were there on the ship?

A: There were many Japanese pictures brides coming to America and there were some Japanese who had been in America, returned to Japan for a visit and were coming back again.

Q: Did anything happen on the ship?

A: I don't remember any incident.

Q: Did you make any friends?

A: I met people who were going to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento and other places but I don't remember their names. There were many brides who were going to their husbands who were working on the railroads in Wyoming and other states.

Q: What did you think America would be like?

A: I was young and I felt like I wanted to come and see the country.

Q: What was your impression when you arrived in Seattle?

A: I just thought this must be America. I remembered there was a 42 story high building in Seattle. There were none like that in Japan in those days.

Q: Did someone meet you in Seattle?

A: My husband was there to meet me.

Q: Was it the first time you two met?

A: Yes.

Q: Please tell me about it.

A: I had seen his pictures and I was acquainted with his brother in Japan, so I didn't feel like he was a stranger.

Q: From Seattle, where did you go?

A: I came to San Francisco with my husband by a ship. At that time, he was looking after his brother-in-law's nursery business near San Leandro. The brother-in-law was in Japan because his mother was critically ill.

Q: What sort of a place was San Leandro?

A: There were many Japanese and quite a few were in the nursery business.

Q: Please tell me about your daily life of those days?

A: We got up early and worked til dark in the evening. We cut carnations and sorted them into number one and number two grades. We disbudded the growing carnations and we were kept busy.

Q: What sort of food did you eat?

A: We cooked Japanese style food.

Q: How was the pay to workers in those days?

A: It was very cheap. I don't think we got 50 cents an hour.

Q: Did anything comical happen?

A: I don't remember any.

Q: How was your newly-wed life?

A: I just took it granted that it was like that.

Q: Did you have difficulty with the English language?

A: I didn't try to learn English. I've been here 60 years and still haven't learned it.

Q: Did your husband own a house?

A: No.

Q: What sort of a place did you live in?

A: The nursery had little (cabins) houses for employees and they were fairly nice. Each family got their own place.

Q: How many years did you work there?

A: Six months after my husband's brother-in-law returned to Japan, my husband's brother came and took over the place so we went to work at Mr. Domoto's nursery. They gave us a nice place to live. We never had to do seasonal work and we didn't have too much hardships.

Q: How long did you work for Mr. Domoto?

A: About 10 months, I think. My husband's brother-in-law came back and settled in Monterey and became a fisherman and his wife (my husband's sister) wanted us to join them.

Q: After you moved here to Monterey, what did you do?

A: My husband came to America when he was 16 years and 10 months old and learned shoe repairing work. That was great help because we raised five children with his earnings.

When we came to Monterey, we worked in a fish market for a while but it wasn't so good. Our friend wanted us to come to Salinas so we moved over there and worked 3 years. Then came back to Monterey in 1921.

Q: What did you do in Salinas?

A: My husband did some shoe repair business and we also did some farming. One year we did very well growing onions but the following year was bad. Then an opportunity to buy a shoe repair shop in Monterey came up. We bought the place and came back to Monterey. It wasn't such a good work but we were fortunate because my husband knew this trade.

In 1919, there was a severe flu epidemic and many people died. In some families, both parents died and the orphaned children had a difficult time. We suffered the flu but we survived.

Q: How many children did you have then?

A: We had two. My husband was drafted in WWI but he was deferred because we had children. Not many but few Japanese served in WWI.

Q: How was it during the Depression?

A: We bought this house in 1931 and people were surprised. We paid for it in cash because they would not take a check. Some may have had difficulties but fishing business (main industry of Monterey) was good in those days. When they went out for abalone, they brought in about 3000.

Q: How many children did you have then?

A: I think all of my children were born by then.

Q: Was your church (Presbyterian Church) here then?

A: Yes, our church was built in 1926.

Q: How many members did you have?

A: Not too many because children were all young.

Q: You were a Buddhist. When did you become a Christian?

A: When we lived in Salinas, we got to know Rev. Hata who was a very nice pastor. Rev. and Mrs. Hata were very nice to us. We both received baptism and joined the church then. The Salinas church was built about that time and we donated quite a lot of money towards the building fund.

Q: What year was this?

A: I think it was around 1919.

Q: What kind of meetings did you have at the church?

A: We had Sunday Worship Services, Women's meeting, Prayer meetings, and etc.

Q: How many members did you have? About 22 or 23?

A: I think it was about that many. Everything went along smoothly. There weren't too many families then so for the fund raising project, I remember we had "Salmon Dinners." We went out and caught the salmon.

Q: How much did you charge for those dinners?

A: At first, it was about 50¢. We served "Salmon Dinners" with abalone chowder and etcs. This is an annual affair now. We served 1100 dinners last year. We used to do it few times a year but now we do it only once a year.

Q: Is there any other memories of the Depression time?

A: I can't think of any.

Q: Did you have hardship raising your children?

A: My husband brought home cash everyday so we didn't have such a hard time. His business was good because people repaired their shoes if they could before buying new ones. People in town didn't suffer too much but farmers had a hard time during the depression. I was able to work in the cannery here.

Q: What kind of a pay did you receive in those days?

A: I think it was about 45¢ an hour.

Q: Did you work 8 hours a day?

A: The hours varied--if there were lot of fish, we had to work overtime and when there were less fish, we worked only few hours. We went to work when the fisherman came in with their load.

(coffee break here--the tape was blank for quite a length).

Q: Just before WWII, did feelings get bad?

A: I think so. I remember the Japanese ship "Tatsuta Maru" left Japan to come to the United States but turned back and returned to Japan.

Q: Where did you hear the "Pearl Harbor" news?

A: That day, we went to Angel Island to see our nephew who was in the army. He was being sent to the Phillipines. On our way home that day, we heard over the radio that Pearl Harbor was bombed. We were shocked to learn that the war was started by Japan. People stared and shouted at us. The nephew did not go to the Phillipines. Instead, he was stationed in eastern United States. Later, he joined the all Japanese-American battalion, the 442, and fought in Europe. (One of my sons also joined the 442 Battalion later.)

When we had to evacuate from the coast area (No. 1 Zone) my husband and I evacuated to Hanford, Calif. The children stayed behind but later they found a place in Reedley, Calif. and we joined them there.

Q: How many children did you have?

A: We had six. They were quite grown. We went to Reedley because we were told that Reedley (No. 2 Zone) was a free area. However, after living there about 3 months, we had to evacuate from there again.

Q: What camp did you go to?

A: We went to Poston War Relocation Center in Arizona in August (1942).

Q: How old was your eldest child?

A: He was 24 or 25. One of my son was discharged from service at that time so the whole family went to Poston together.

Q: What was life in Poston like?

A: There were many Japanese there.

Q: What did you do everyday?

A: I made paper flowers to use for funerals and etcs.

Q: What did your husband do?

A: He was asked to work in the shoe repair shop.

Q: Did anything happen in Poston?

A: There were two camps in Poston. In the No. 2 Camp, someone was hit by a pro-Japan man with a 2X4 lumber because this person said Japan was losing. The pro-Japan people were sent to Tule Lake Camp.

Q: What did you think of the "Loyalty"questionnaires?

A: Some people had short wave radios and they listened to the news of the war. I didn't want Japan to lose.

Q: Were Niseis taken into service? What did you think of it?

A: My son, Joe, was discharged and was back with us at the time of evacuation. He volunteered and joined the U.S. Army again from the Center. My husband was against it but my son said it would be a shame if none of us served. I thought he was right and it helped us too. He joined the 442 Battalion, fought in Italy, France and Germany. I felt that we should be loyal to the United States because our son was in the service. My husband didn't like it because some didn't have good words for families who had children in the service.

Q: How long did you stay in Poston?

A: We returned to Monterey on July 3, 1945 .

Q: During camp life, did you worry about your children's education?

A: My second son was in the service. Third son went out to work from the camp. Eldest son got a job in Denver and another son graduated high school while we were in Reedley in 1942.

Q: Was there some enjoyment in the camp?

A: Not very much.

Q: Were there any hardship?

A: We were able to buy necessities at the canteen there.

Q: What type of a place did you live in?

A: We lived in barracks covered with tar paper.

Q: Were the rooms large enough for your family?

A: It wasn't very large but we were given a room and if we wanted it partitioned, we had to do it ourselves.

Q: Was it a hot place to live?

A: It was a hot place but we were able to buy coolers and install them ourselves.

Q: Was the camp closed in 1945?

A: As soon as we were permitted to return to the west coast, we returned because we had a house here. It was a few months before the war ended. People who didn't have a home had to come out to a hostel opened up by churches and etcs.

We boarded the windows and kept our furniture and friend's things stored in our house during the war. We had to move them out before we came in.

Q: Weren't you fortunate to have your house and furniture intact when you returned? I heard some evacuee's home were burned.

A: Yes, we were fortunate. Our neighbors liked us and they were good to us.

Q: Were some Japanese arrested when the war broke out?

A: The F.B.I. picked up a few whom they thought were dangerous to this country. They didn't take any christians from this community.

Q: When you returned here from the camp, did your neighbors welcome you?

A: I met someone I knew in town who said "Are the Japs back?" There were only few like that. Some came to our home and welcomed us back.

Q: People in the hostel--where did they go?

A: The people in the hostel had to find a place to live. The church operated the hostel. Some who lived elsewhere before the war came to our hostel. They now live in this area. Most of my friends around here had a house.

Q: What kind of work did you take up after you returned?

A: The shoe shop was rented out with the understanding that they were to return it to us 3 months after we came back.

Q: Do you have any memories of those days?

A: I was glad we were able to get back. Joe was still serving in Europe (in the Army). I was worried about him. One day a card came and I was relieved. After the war was over, he returned home.

Q: We are planning to translate this tape into English for the younger generation. Are there anythings you wish to say to them?

A: I think the younger generation are more advanced than us.

Q: Did you have any special goal while you were raising your children?

A: Nothing special. I am glad they grew up without much difficulty. I think it is because they went to church school.

Q: Is there anything special that you want to mention?

A: No, there isn't.

Q: What do you think of the "Sanseis?"

A: "Sanseis" are different than "Niseis". The way we raised "Niseis" and the way "Niseis" are raising "Sanseis" are quite different. They have many conveniences that we didn't have. The Isseis had a much harder time than the present generation.

"The End"